



# WALES GRASSROOTS FACILITIES FUND - PHASE 1

## EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST GUIDANCE

### INTRODUCTION

The following guidance has been prepared to provide advice for applicants completing an Expression of Interest for the **Grassroots Facilities Fund - Phase 1, 2021/22**.

This is a fast track grants programme, with priority projects which can achieve a signed grant agreement and be initiated by March 2022 and be completed by the end of June 2022.

The FAW expects the facilities investment programme to continue and increase, over the next few years, and therefore any unsuccessful applications in Phase 1 may be carried over for consideration in future funding rounds.

Organisations that do not submit an Expression of Interest for Phase 1 funding will still be able to submit an application for future funding phases, as and when these programmes are announced.

By completing the Expressions of Interest form, it not only enables the FAW to select priority projects, but will also demonstrate the demand and need for more and better facilities, which underpins our business case for future funding.

This Expressions of Interest Guidance must be read before reviewing and completing the Expression of Interest form.

### BACKGROUND

During 2021, the UK Government has been announcing its intention to invest £230 million during the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025, towards improving and increasing grassroots football facilities across the UK. This has included an initial £25 million in respect of the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 (Phase 1 funding period).

The funding forms part of the UK Government's levelling-up agenda and will be prioritised for left-behind communities and used to help address health inequalities and encourage children and young people to get more active by enabling more people to access high-quality facilities that can be used for football and other sports. Whilst Wales's share of the £230m has yet to be confirmed, the UK Government has now confirmed that Wales will receive £1.3m in respect of Phase 1 funding.

#### **FAW's "Our Wales" Strategy**

The FAW recently launched its 'Our Wales' strategy covering the period to 2026, which includes a number of participation targets as we continue to develop football within Wales. A key strategy objective is 'Inspirational and fit-for-future facilities'.

We have big ambitions to transform grassroots football and facilities on club, parks, and education sites, and in announcing this intention, we recognise that delivering better facilities will be one of the biggest challenges facing the future of football in Wales.



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Whilst Phase 1 funding is expected to be oversubscribed, the facility investment programme is expected to span several years, and therefore Expressions of Interests that cannot be turned into a deliverable project in Phase 1 will then remain under consideration in future phases.

### OUTCOMES EXPECTED FROM THE GRASSROOTS FACILITIES FUND

#### Football priority themes:

Our 5-year strategy sets a bold ambition to achieve 120,000 registered male and female players by 2026, which equates to an increase of 30,000 players. In facilities terms, this translates into more and better facilities i.e. over 4,500 additional pitch hours per week.

The expected football outcomes of the Grassroots Facilities Fund will be:

- A growth in participation in sport and recreational activity.
- Stronger and more stable community focussed clubs, with more players across all ages and backgrounds, i.e. inclusive of people with disabilities, people from BAME backgrounds and benefitting areas where there are higher levels of socio- economic disadvantage.
- A particular focus on helping achieve our target of doubling the numbers of women and girls playing football.

#### Government priority themes:

- Creating welcoming and inclusive, community facilities and football accessible to all, along with active community partnerships that serve wider needs and provides facilities that can also be used for other activities.
- Enabling growth in participation across all corners of the nation - aiming for everyone to be within an average of 15 minutes from a high-quality football pitch. Creating more opportunities for participation particularly more girls and women, people from BAME backgrounds and people with disabilities playing football.
- Helping deliver against the Government's 'Levelling up' agenda, targeting priority local authority areas, deprived and 'left behind' communities, addressing health and socio-economic inequalities.

#### Example football outputs (types of projects):

- Facilities for training (floodlit) or match play.
- Upgraded/new grass pitches.
- Upgraded/new pavilions.
- Conversion of facilities to create floodlit 3G pitches, or construction of new floodlit 3G pitches, all serving as club hubs.
- Capital equipment i.e. essential to the playing of sport, or machinery for maintenance i.e. where clubs have taken over the management of a facility under a Local Authority Asset Transfer Programme.
- It is expected that a particular focus will be on:
  - Better grass pitches and pavilions, particularly club managed i.e. enabling clubs to develop their 'home ground' grass roots pitches and pavilions.



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- 3G pitch, school/community club hubs – underpinned by a business plan that secures community usage led by federations of local leagues and clubs.
- More female welcoming facilities i.e. with appropriate toilet, showers and changing provision; positive imagery; separate changing for female referees etc.

### **Potential Applicants**

In order to maximise the impact of the grassroots funding programme, we are inviting applications from:

- Voluntary sector bodies i.e. sports clubs, sports and social organisations and football clubs; and
- Public bodies i.e. Local Authorities, Universities, Colleges, Schools, and the Private Sector.

Each project will be considered on its own merits, measured against the priority criteria below. Whilst there are no absolute maximum grant funding levels for any one project, we will want to know whether or not you are able to contribute towards the project costs.

If you do not have other funding, this will not prevent us from supporting your project if it scores highly against the other priority criteria. However, we will assess financial need as well as sustainability and the availability of partnership funding will also enable us to better respond to demand and share the funding more widely.

As a guide, for the majority of cases i.e. other than in exceptional circumstances, the expected level of grant funding in Phase 1 will be up to 70% for public bodies and 90% for voluntary sector bodies.

### **Phase 1 fund prioritisation criteria**

The following factors will be weighted according to relative impact and then used to prioritise the received expression of interest:

- Location
  - Priority geographical areas i.e. where there are high levels of Multiple Deprivation.
  - Areas where there is evidence of demand/facility shortfall, plus where improving the quality of existing facilities can significantly impact positively on current provision.
- Evidence of demand/facility shortfall; local plans; consultations.
- Track record of delivering development and growth with currently available facilities i.e. the numbers of juniors, school links, girls and women's teams.
- Levels of increased participation that will be generated by facility improvements in the short and medium terms - how will it be used/projected user groups, particularly the impact and focus on women and girls.
- Levels of wider community engagement: multi-sport projects enabling participation in other sports/physical activities; social; health and wellbeing impact; volunteering and learning of new skills.
- Robustness of delivery model - how the project will be managed to secure the desired outputs; partnerships in place.
- Projected financial models – partnership funding, viability, sustainability, maintenance and replacement.
- Ability to satisfy all the detailed grant requirements by the published deadlines i.e. to:
  - Submit a detailed application within 4-6 weeks;



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- Sign off a contractual grant offer and project initiation by no later than 10<sup>th</sup> March 2022;
- Complete the project by the end of June 2022.

### HOW TO APPLY

1. Register your interest and proposed project idea by completing the Expression of Interest Form via Survey Monkey by no later than **2200hrs Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2021**.

[Please click here to access the form.](#)

2. Applicants will be advised by mid December 2021 if:
  - If, they are to be invited to submit a detailed application for funding available for projects ready to proceed in 2022; or
  - Whilst their project is not ready to proceed in 2022, or is not currently a priority for funding, it can be reconsidered for future funding rounds (when the amount of funding is expected to be greater); or
  - That their application was considered to be a low priority and would need to be modified if it is to be considered for future funding.
3. The submission of detailed applications will be required by the end of January 2022.
4. Successful applications will be offered funding through a Form of Agreement in March 2022, with signed acceptance required by no later than 10<sup>th</sup> March 2022
5. All successful applications will need to have initiated their project by **no later than 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 and completed it by no later than 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022**.

### FURTHER DETAILS

Applicants invited to proceed to the detailed application stage process, will be advised of the following: standard terms and conditions attached to any capital grant funding; requirements before proceeding; procurement; cash flow and grant draw down; publicity requirements; post completion monitoring and evaluation etc.

We hope you find the Expression of Interest form easy to complete and submit. If you have any questions in relation to the process, please email [facilities@faw.cymru](mailto:facilities@faw.cymru). Your request will then be forwarded to someone who can help you with your query.